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ABSTRACT

The Lucretia Crocker Program recognizes the importance and potential impact of teacher-initiated innovation in public schools. The program is named for the woman who set up educational programs for emancipated blacks after the Civil War and promoted educational opportunity for blacks and women. Brief descriptions are given of the following innovative programs: (1) "Project Barn/Cod" (Joy Buhler); (2) "Writing Across the Curriculum" (Marna Bunce); (3) "Teaching as Thinking" (Terri Caffelle); (4) "Pathfinder Writing Project" (Susan Costa); (5) "Planting and Learning Activity Yards" (Bruce Robert Dean); (6) "Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum Model for K-1" (Karen DeRusha); (7) "The Transitional Team" (Edmund Nazzaro); (8) "The Mexican Exchange" (Nancy Rillings); (9) "Student Team Learning" (Faye Ruopp); (10) "How Much Does a Sand Dune Weigh?" (Barbara Shea and Samuel Slarskey); (11) "Witnessing the Past" (Susan Szachowicz); (12) "All Aboard for Black History" (Mary Ann Thompson); (13) "The Childrens Literature Project" (Joan Tieman); and (14) "Renaissance in the Public Schools" (Carolee Varga and Pauline Boutin). (JD)

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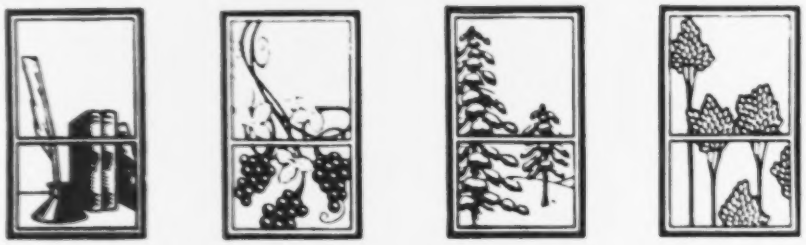
1986-1987



Exemplary Teacher Initiated Programs

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Chapter 188
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The Lucretia Crocker Program

For the dissemination of exemplary programs created by Massachusetts teachers
The Massachusetts Department of Education

CHAPTER 188

October 21, 1986

Dear Massachusetts Teachers, School Officials, and Other Interested Individuals:

I am pleased to introduce the 1986-87 Lucretia Crocker Resource Guide. Commissioner Harold Raynolds, the Board of Education, the Department and the Legislature join me in expressing our delight to be sharing information on the program and teachers that have been selected as this year's fellows. The quality and variety of these exemplary programs, and of the individuals associated with them, are noteworthy. As you can tell from the general profiles of the fellows and their programs, the first year selections represent a wonderful cross-section of public education experience, commitment, and creativity.

Now we are ready to begin the next phase of this unique program. School districts across the State are invited to consider replicating any of the fellowship programs that appear to meet the needs of your schools. This fall, the Lucretia Crocker Fellows will conduct workshops at the six regional centers of the Department of Education, as well as in a variety of other educational settings. In the winter and spring of 1987 they will disseminate their programs in school districts which have been selected as adoption sites. If, after reviewing the program descriptions in the Guide, You would like information on the application process for program adoption, contact me at the Department of Education, Bureau of School Programs, 1385 Hancock Street, Quincy (617-770-7559).

The Department of Education is very proud of the Lucretia Crocker Program and all the individuals - both inside and outside the Department - who have made it possible. We hope all of you, whether your contact with the program and the fellows is limited or on-going, will come to share our excitement, and our belief in the potential of the program to enhance the teaching profession and to improve schools. Together we must continue to support and spotlight the types of teachers and programs exemplified by the Lucretia Crocker Program. I welcome your comments on our selection and replication processes, and any suggestions you have for the future of the program.

Sincerely,

Doreen H. Wilkinson

Doreen H. Wilkinson
Assistant Director

The Lucretia Crocker Program:
Recognition of Teacher-Initiated Innovation

This Resource Guide describes fourteen unique and innovative educational programs, and the creative, dedicated teachers who brought them to life. Selected in a statewide competitive process, these teachers constitute the first "class" of Lucretia Crocker Fellows. As Lucretia Crocker fellows they will be available throughout the 1986-87 academic year to share their programs with teachers, schools and school districts throughout the state.

Established under the Massachusetts education reform act (Chapter 188), the Lucretia Crocker Program recognizes the importance and potential impact of teacher-initiated innovation. Like the 19th century educational reformer for whom this program was named, the Lucretia Crocker fellowship winners have all made important contributions to their own schools and school districts.

Lucretia Crocker was a teacher who set up educational programs for emancipated Blacks after the Civil War and then returned to her native Massachusetts where she promoted the development of math, science and laboratory science for females as well as males. Above all, she is remembered and honored for her commitment to increased access to educational opportunity for blacks and women.

Each year the Lucretia Crocker Program will award fellowships to public school teachers who have been instrumental in the development of innovative educational programs. The selection process for the 1986-87 fellowships began last March at the school district level. School districts could nominate one educational program and a teacher or team of teachers who had been instrumental in developing the program. (Districts with enrollment over 10,000 could nominate two.)

Review teams coordinated by the Regional Education Centers of the Department of Education selected the finalists through a process of rating applications and conducting site visits. After a statewide validation process involving intensive interviews, a total of sixteen teachers, representing fourteen innovative programs, became Lucretia Crocker Fellows.

The Lucretia Crocker Fellows:
Resources for the Schools

The fellowship winners presented on the following pages are an experienced, commited and creative group representing over 200 years of teaching experience. They come from 14 different school districts across the state. The programs they have helped to develop span all grade levels, involve a variety of subject areas and include all of the diverse populations in the Commonwealth.

What these teachers have demonstrated, above all, is a creative capacity to make innovative programs work in Massachusetts schools. Like other teachers they have derived energy from student interest and administrative and community support; like others, they have learned to work within budgetary constraints.

The Lucretia Crocker fellows are available to schools and school districts that are interested in adopting their programs. They are prepared to share their expertise in any number of ways: offering introductory presentations to groups of administrators, teachers and parents, hosting visits to their home schools where the program is in operation, conducting in-service workshops for teachers and classroom demonstrations with students, and providing ongoing technical assistance and support to individual teachers.

The Lucretia Crocker fellows recognize that some of the strategies they have created are directly transferable to other school systems, while, in other cases, the same principles might apply in a different form. They are prepared to work closely with their colleagues in other schools to adapt the program to the needs and interests of those school situations.

The level of commitment required from adopting school districts will differ depending on the nature of the program being disseminated. In some cases fellows have indicated the importance of working intensively in a school or school district for a period of a month or more. In other cases, the fellows see themselves running one or two days of in-service sessions and then providing individual follow-up as needed. These preferences are indicated in the descriptions offered in this Resource Guide.

Schools and school districts wanting more information about the Lucretia Crocker Program or interested in becoming an adoption site can contact Doreen Wilkinson, the Massachusetts Department of Education, Bureau of School Programs, 1385 Hancock Street, Quincy, Mass. Phone: (617) 770-7559.

Joy Buhler
Project Barn/Cod: Developing Thinking Skills

Both students and teachers sometimes feel that classroom learning overemphasizes the acquisition of facts at the expense of expanding critical thinking skills. While students gain knowledge, their creative and analytical skills may remain undeveloped. PROJECT BARN/COD is a training and support program for teachers that helps them foster the development of higher order thinking skills in their students. The success of this project is demonstrated by its expansion from an initial group of four staff to a program now involving more than 65 teachers in Barnstable.

Through participating in PROJECT BARN/COD, teachers develop curricula that take cognitive processes into account as well as content. The content material becomes a vehicle through which students move beyond rote memorization to such higher level skills as absorbing, digesting, manipulating, analyzing and synthesizing material. Teachers act as facilitators or coaches as they confer with students and help them complete activities. Students move from being passive recipients of knowledge imparted to them by the teacher to becoming active participants in their own learning.

Joy Buhler has been involved in PROJECT BARN/COD since its inception in 1981, when she was the first English teacher selected to participate. Since then the project has expanded to include teachers and students in grades 8-12 in a wide variety of subject areas, including: science, mathematics, social studies, English, art and foreign language. The project serves all students, whatever their academic level, with a particular focus on the middle level students who have often been forgotten in curriculum reform efforts.

Joy prefers to train a team of teachers in a school system, who can then become an in-house training team for others. Initially, the teachers review the four higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy: application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. They then actually design student-centered activities for their courses that will help students develop their higher level thinking skills. After activities and lessons have been reviewed by the trainer, the teachers implement them in the classroom. Finally the trainer assists in evaluation and any necessary revisions.

Ideally, a team of teachers should have release time for training and writing: one full day followed by at least two to three successive days devoted to the beginning stage of team brain-storming, review of existing curriculum and writing of new lessons and activities. The program is also readily adaptable to a half-day or after-school in-service format, where lessons targeting specific thinking skills can be developed by participants. During training sessions, Joy will serve as team facilitator, lesson evaluator and advisor—reviewing lesson plans and offering suggestions for implementation. Beyond the first training, Joy will continue to serve as technical assistant to the teacher/writers as required.

Joy Buhler has been in the Barnstable school system for thirteen years, teaching both in the middle school and high school. She has served as a primary trainer for PROJECT BARN/COD, working with teachers from all of the major subject areas. In addition to training others in the process, she herself has served as a consultant and supervisor, as well as writing several English curricula. She has introduced the program through workshops and presentations as well as one to one consultations.

Marna Bunce
Writing Across the Curriculum

Writing is an important vehicle through which young students can develop their self-confidence and their ability to think and learn. It should be a natural part of the curriculum in every subject area. WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM is a program designed to help teachers integrate writing into their teaching process and to help students use writing as a central part of their learning process.

In the Pelham elementary school where she teaches, Marna Bunce has involved classroom teachers grades K-6, reading teachers and Chapter I and special education staff in a collaborative effort to teach writing "across the curriculum." Whether the lesson is related to Science, Math, English or Social Studies, teachers are encouraged to incorporate writing activities. Thus in a science class students might make predictions in writing, conduct an experiment and then record their procedures and findings. In math class students might be asked to record their estimations and explain how they arrived at a solution to a problem. Students begin to view writing as a valuable learning tool in all their subject areas.

When children first begin writing they may be somewhat overwhelmed by the process of clarifying their thoughts and then finding the words to express those thoughts on paper. WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM makes writing accessible and enjoyable to all children by defining each step of the process and guiding students through it. Drawing current research on teaching writing, as well as on her own teaching experiences, Marna Bunce has developed a process approach to teaching writing that is organized around six basic steps: prewriting, writing, revising editing, publishing and evaluating.

During each of these steps the process is one that places students at the center of their own learning. For example, during the prewriting stage, children learn strategies like brainstorming, drawing and visualizing to generate thoughts and ideas for their writing. During the revising stage classmates engage in peer teaching, as they read each other's writing and offer comments and suggestions for improvement. And, in the final segment of the process, evaluating, students learn how to become their own critics.

In disseminating WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM to other schools, Marna would like to replicate the in-service process she used in Pelham. Ideally, she will spend approximately a month in a school, conducting a weekly workshop for participating teachers and spending time with them in their own classrooms. Follow-up visits and consultation will then be arranged as needed. Recognizing that one of the best ways to learn is to teach, Marna will also encourage participating teachers to plan ways to involve other teachers within their building in teaching writing.

Marna Bunce has been a classroom teacher for thirteen years, teaching in all grades from kindergarten through sixth. She has recently completed an Ed.D. at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where she had the opportunity to do research on the process of teaching writing. She has been involved with inservice education for the past six years in the areas of writing, reading, math and science. Two years ago she worked in Tanzania, East Africa as a writing consultant to high school and college English teachers. She also edited a reader for secondary schools in Tanzania.

Terri Caffelle
Teaching for Thinking:
The Cooperative Teacher Model

Educators agree that thinking skills should be the major focus of education today. TEACHING FOR THINKING is a program that helps teachers to integrate thinking skills into the existing curriculum, rather than add another element to an already crowded curriculum. At the Coolidge Elementary School in Shrewsbury, Terri CAffelle has worked with eight of her colleagues in developing the "Cooperative Teacher Model," a process through which classroom teachers and special education staff work together in teams to plan specific thinking skill strategies and activities for their classrooms.

As a result of participating in TEACHING FOR THINKING, teachers adopt a different strategy to teaching the same material. Even an apparently straightforward lesson in handwriting can be used to teach thinking skills if children are asked to compare and contrast a "b" and a "d" to focus on their difference in structure. A nutrition lesson can build their capabilities to distinguish between junk food and nutritious food—and to discriminate between reliable and unreliable sources of information. Any classroom activity can be structured so that it encourages all children to think, not merely the gifted ones. The program has been successfully adapted to teachers and students at the elementary level, but could be used at all grade levels.

Terri Caffelle will be available to help other schools adapt TEACHING FOR THINKING to their particular needs. She would like to work closely with an initial team of teachers and administrators at a school. After they have been trained and have begun to implement the program, they will involve other teachers in their own school, using the Cooperative Teacher Model developed at the Coolidge School.

The initial team identified at a school will need release time to attend a two-day training session, during which Terri will help them analyze specific thinking skills, create lessons, demonstrate these lessons in the classroom, and then revise and evaluate their work. Because the teachers develop their materials themselves and therefore understand it, they will use it with more success and confidence, and will be ready to train others in the same process. In addition to conducting the initial training, Terri will be available to do classroom follow-up with the teachers and to attend and assist at training sessions run by the initial team for other teams of teachers in their school. Terri Caffelle has seven years of classroom experience in grades K-4. A key figure in developing the Cooperative Teacher Model, Terri has worked as a teacher trainer during the 1985-86 school year, conducting workshops, coordinating the sessions, guiding teachers through the analysis of critical thinking skills and advising them on the follow-up. She is currently working on her Master's Degree in the Critical and Creative Thinking Program at the University of Massachusetts in Boston.

Susan Costa
The Pathfinder Writing Project

All students, regardless of their educational program or academic skill level, need to develop their writing skills. Recognizing that need, Susan Costa researched and received training on the topic of teaching writing. The fruit of her endeavors is The PATHFINDER WRITING PROJECT, an interdisciplinary, student-centered approach to teaching high school students how to write.

The premise of the PATHFINDER WRITING PROJECT is that writing is a process that everyone can learn to participate in and even enjoy. Instruction takes students through each step of the process, from pre-writing activities, to writing and finally to revision. A variety of materials are used to inspire writing, including magazines, newspapers, anthologies, film and student writing collections. During writing time a studio approach is used, with the teacher circulating through the room addressing individual needs, or, if time permits, writing along with students. When students have completed writing and revising a piece it goes up on "The Writing Wall," where they can see the results of their efforts and be reminded of their successes.

The curriculum functions within the structure of English and Social Studies classes, grades 9-12. Writing assignments are geared to the content of the unit being taught. Thus, students might be reading Steinbeck and writing about their own loneliness and alienation, or trying to rival Poe's macabre or Shakespeare's metaphor. In Social Studies classes they might write immigrant biographies or letters to the President; they conduct interviews and record oral histories, read about the Holocaust, listen to guest speakers give first-hand accounts and maintain a journal of their thoughts and feelings. Expected to write often and to write competently in both their English and Social Studies classes, students receive the message that writing is important.

Each year the PATHFINDER WRITING PROJECT culminates in the publication of a collection of student writings from grades 9-12. These collections serve a number of important purposes: they help to build students' confidence in their writing ability, they instill school-wide pride in the work students do and they provide teachers with wonderful writing models to use in their curriculum.

While the Pathfinder program is tailored to meet the needs of a particular population, it is based on a philosophy that can be applied to any school eager to make writing skills a priority. Susan Costa proposes to spend four to eight weeks within a school working with a small group of teachers. Her time would be spent assisting and demonstrating techniques in the classroom, meeting with each teacher individually to analyze and plan lessons, and holding a weekly in-service session for the group. Much of this work could take place during the school day and after school, but approximately two half-day sessions would require that teachers receive release time.

Susan received a B.A. degree from the College of New Rochelle and an M.Ed. from the University of Massachusetts. For the past twelve years, she has taught English at Pathfinder where she has also co-designed the school's current English curriculum and established and implemented the Basic Skills Improvement Plan for Writing. As Coordinator of the Writing Project, she has been responsible for coordinating the inter-disciplinary efforts of the English and Social Studies Departments and providing staff development for program members. She has also given in-service workshops at area high schools and has been a presenter at summer Writing Institutes and at conferences sponsored by the Western Massachusetts Five College/Public School Partnership and the University of Massachusetts.

Bruce Robert Dean
Exploring the Outdoor Classroom: Planting and Learning Activity Yards

Every school currently faces the problem of stretching limited resources to meet the needs of students. One important approach to solving that problem is for schools to make better use of their own resources and the resources of the local community. PLANTING AND LEARNING ACTIVITY YARDS is a program that builds cooperation between schools and communities. Parents and other community members become involved in transforming ordinary playground space into a lively outdoor classroom and nature center—and community center for concerts and artistic events. They also become directly involved in classrooms, through the visiting artists component of the program.

Many elementary school play areas are not used as fully as teachers and principals would like; some have even fallen into disrepair. At the same time, modifications or repairs may seem costly, and elaborate equipment is beyond the means of many systems. In Uxbridge, where PLANGINT AND LEARNING ACTIVITY YARDS was developed, Bruce Dean worked with an active Parents Advisory Council, local businesses, local artists, students, and other teachers and successfully created an environment where the whole community can enjoy summer concerts and activities, as well as one where students can learn about agriculture, ecology, and energy alternatives.

Students worked together to design and create a space that includes carpentry benches, herbal gardening beds, raised gardening beds for each class, a weather station powered by a windmill, "play and learn" graphics on asphalt, murals, and picnic tables for outdoor activities and classes. Funds for the model project were raised largely through the Parents Advisory Council, which sought both volunteers and materials from local businesses. Many elements were integrated: high school shop students built shed and picnic tables; the Arts Council sponsored summer events; a mini-grant was awarded by the Massachusetts Electric Company to set up a weather station; a local landscaper provided native plants. At the same time, community artists and artisans visited classrooms to share their skills and enthusiasm with students.

Drawing on his unique combination of skills as a teacher, artist and playground designer, Bruce wants to help other schools and communities work together to create exciting learning environments both inside and outside the school building. He will be available to make informational presentations about PLANTING AND LEARNING ACTIVITY YARDS, to conduct planning workshops for teachers and to work closely with parents on a playground committee. Schools interested in adopting the program will be asked to make a commitment to release teachers for three 2-hour planning sessions and one full-day workshop. In these sessions staff will work on identifying and developing areas that will support and extend their current curricula to the outdoors.

Teachers will also be assisted in how to involve students in the process of drawing, model-making and site planning. At the same time, parents will be drawn in to assume leadership roles on a playground committee which develops, reviews, and approves designs; coordinates volunteers for special workdays; secures tools and materials; organizes workday refreshments and conducts fundraising activities. An essential part of successful PLANTING AND LEARNING ACTIVITY YARDS is an ongoing plan for maintenance, to repair any acts of vandalism or equipment deterioration.

Bruce Dean has worked in an array of educational settings from day care centers to a residential home for emotionally disturbed adolescents. For the past ten years he has worked as an art teacher at every grade level, K-12, while continuing to develop his own skills as a woodworker, photographer, and painter. Using his Master's degree from Boston University in Designing Spaces for Educational Settings, as well as his extensive experience, he has served as a consultant to many school systems interested in improving outdoor play areas.

Karen DeRusha
Learning by Playing:
A Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum Model for K-1

For young children, play is a very important learning activity. While most kindergarten and first grade classrooms contain materials for play, the curriculum is becoming increasingly defined in terms of workbook-oriented paper and pencil activities. LEARNING BY PLAYING uses such childhood activities as play with sand and water, blockbuilding and dramatic play as the basis for sequential and developmentally appropriate learning for K-1 age group. It has the advantage of allowing for a wide range of abilities through open-ended activities, as well as connecting the new experience of being in school to familiar materials and situations.

As examples of how the various approaches are used, water play can help children learn about sinking and floating: they predict, test and record which objects will sink and which will float; learn why the objects behave as they do; record findings; build boats from a variety of materials and test different designs. Similarly, through blockbuilding children can be made aware of math concepts like seriation, classification, equivalence, conservation of number and area, symmetry, balance, problem solving and spatial relationships. A child who puts together two square blocks to equal one unit block will discover the concept of equivalence differently than one who does a workbook exercise. This program also uses dramatic play to enliven social studies and language arts curricula. For example, after a field trip to a hospital, children might set up their own hospital in the classroom, making signs and labeling items, as well as acting out real-life situations.

To make this curriculum model for K-1 available to other teachers, Karen DeRusha plans a series of activities for participating school systems. These include:

- Workshops for teachers and principals. Three workshops will be offered: Sand/Water, Blockbuilding, and Dramatic Play. Each workshop includes a discussion of developmental learning theory, a demonstration of materials and activities, and a discussion of implementation issues. The workshops can be spread out over several months so that concepts can be introduced gradually, or they can be presented in a short time period for more integrated approaches. A school system might choose to begin with only one of the three initial workshops and proceed through the follow-through stages. Two or three school systems might participate jointly.

- Visits to a Newton kindergarten class to see the curriculum in action.

- Individual, on-site consultation. As teachers begin to design and implement their programs, Karen will support and assist them on-site on a regularly scheduled basis.

- A followup workshop. Participating teachers meet to critique the program, recognize successes, areas for improvement and strategies to make it work better. At this workshop a plan will be made for future support of the program.

- Information meeting for parents. If the school system feels that it is appropriate a meeting for parents can be conducted to describe the program and show slides of how it works.

- Evaluation. A formal evaluation at the end of the year will include recommendations for future directions and possible modifications.

Karen DeRusha is a primary grade specialist, with eighteen years of experience in grades K-3. She has led numerous workshops for teachers and for parents, most recently leading a workshop series for Multi-Cultural Pre-School Parents. She has taught Math for Young Children at Wheelock College and has lectured on Methods of Teaching Science and Social Studies at Lesley College. The daughter of two teachers herself, she looks forward to working with other teachers to adapt the programs she has successfully implemented in Newton.

Edmund Nazzaro
The Transitional Team Program

The isolation of special needs children is a concern in many school systems. Typically, they spend substantial periods of time in a special education resource room—an environment which may meet their educational needs effectively, but which keeps them away from their peers and may hamper their emotional and social development. The dilemma is how to develop a creative program for "at risk" students while not disrupting the education of others or jeopardizing staff morale—or adding to educational costs.

Ed Nazzaro, along with other regular education and special needs teachers and administrators at Winthrop Middle School developed the TRANSITIONAL TEAM PROGRAM as an ingenious solution to this dilemma. They were facing a situation in which special education students were being mainstreamed, but appropriate modifications were not being made in the academic program to ensure their success. In the program they devised, teachers at each grade level work together as a "transitional team," composed of a Math, English, Social Studies, Science and special needs teacher, as well as a school guidance counselor. Each team is responsible for about 25 students, approximately 10 of whom are identified as being "at risk" due to their learning needs. The special needs and regular teachers work closely together to provide a coherent educational program for these students.

Perhaps the most unique aspect of the program is that special needs teachers co-teach social studies and science with the regular subject teachers. The subject teacher, for example, might focus on content, while the special needs teacher interjects questions or comments to help students learn. At other times, the special needs teacher might take the lead and work with the entire class, while her or his counterpart provides individual attention to anyone who needs some extra help. Math and English are provided by the special needs teachers and subject teacher at the same time within different classrooms. This system allows the special needs teacher to offer a remedial program as the subject teacher provides small group instruction.

All of the students involved benefit from this arrangement. At the Winthrop Middle School, the students have become more confident as a result of the program, and feel part of the total group. Students who do not have academic difficulties have new opportunities for peer teaching and leadership, and "at risk" students see that they can hold their own in a mainstream setting. Once teachers overcame an understandable initial reluctance to share control of the classroom, they have enjoyed collaborating with each other, and are gratified by the improved responses of all students.

While the TRANSITIONAL TEAM PROGRAM approach is designed primarily for middle to high school settings, components of the program can be adapted to meet the needs of elementary schools as well. Ed has already begun to work with teachers from the Framingham Public Schools and the Massachusetts School Counselors' Association; and he has hosted visiting teachers from the Norwood, Salem, and Revere Public Schools who have come to observe the program in action. He is looking forward to sharing his experience with teachers and administrators in other communities.

To help other systems adopt the program, Ed Nazzaro plans to invite teachers and administrators to observe the Winthrop program in operation and discuss it with staff involved. He will also be available to meet with teachers and administrators in their own schools and to provide consultation and technical assistance in program planning and implementation. In addition to sharing his knowledge of what worked well, Ed will alert teachers to some of the possible pitfalls and how to avoid them.

A graduate of Boston College, Ed has been a special education teacher for 18 years, first as a resource teacher of students with moderate special needs and then as evaluation team chairperson at Winthrop Junior High/Middle School. He has a great deal of experience in staff training: his inservice presentations include such topics as planning and implementing "mainstreamed" programs for special education students, student learning styles and developing an education program for at risk students. He has also served as "convener" of the Commonwealth Inservice Institute programs for regular and special education teachers who deal with at risk students.

Nancy Rillings
The Mexican Exchange Program

An exchange program provides an opportunity for children to learn about a culture very different from their own. At a time when our society is becoming increasingly multi-cultural it is especially important for students to gain an appreciation of differences and to share the values and traditions of their heritages. For the past 13 years, the entire student budy of the Sanderson Academy, as well as the communities of Ashfield and Plainfield, have benefitted from THE MEXICAN EXCHANGE PROGRAM. As a member of the team that has implemented that program, Nancy Rillings looks forward to helping other schools develop similar programs.

Each year a group of approximately 20 fifth and sixth graders from Sanderson travel to a bilingual school in Mexico City for two and a half weeks. They live with a Mexican family, attend school, visit cultural sites and tour the local countryside. At the same time, an equal number of Mexican children are hosted by Ashfield and Plainfield families and follow a similar itinerary. When the visits are over, the children continue to exchange letters and keep in touch with their international families and friends for months and even years after.

The opportunities for cultural exchange and enhanced cultural awareness are numerous, and are by no means limited to those students who actually go on the trip or host Mexican children. As part of the MEXICAN EXCHANGE PROGRAM students begin learning Spanish in the primary grades. Through a variety of curriculum units, classroom activities and special events, students become familiar with Mexican history, geography, and culture. Students write letters to students at the Mexican school through a regular pen pal exchange. Those who are going to Mexico receive intensive basic Spanish instruction prior to the trip.

The MEXICAN EXCHANGE PROGRAM is a model that works; it can take many forms, depending on the needs, interests and resources of the school community. Wherever the exchange, the program involves developing a series of curricular activities and special events that prepare students for and excite students about the exchange. The exchange itself becomes the focal point for an interdisciplinary, multi-cultural learning experience. The first step is to identify a school within a community that is culturally different and to arrange a three-day to three-week exchange for upper elementary or middle school age children.

For example, a rural-urban exchange could take place within Massachusetts, with communities like Ashfield and Plainfield making a "sister school" arrangement with a school in Boston. Or, also within Massachusetts, an island-off island exchange could occur, involving Martha's Vineyard or Nantucket and an urban "mainland" community. More ambitious exchanges include a North-South exchange (i.e. Boston to Savannah) or a Boston-Montreal exchange.

Carrying out such a program requires the support and commitment of the administration, school committee, parents and faculty. Nancy Rillings will be available to meet with any or all of these groups to present information about developing a student exchange program. She will also be available to assist in the actual implementation of such a program. A school wishing to adapt this program will have to designate a person or committee to develop, coordinate and sustain it.

Nancy has fourteen years of teaching experience in grades K-5, much of it in rural communities. She received a B.A. in early childhood education from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and is working toward a masters in educational administration at North Adams State College. In developing the MEXICAN EXCHANGE PROGRAM she has worked closely with two other teachers and the principal at the Sanderson Academy, who continue to carry on the program in her absence.

Faye Ruopp
Student Team Learning

The quality of student interaction in the classroom has an important effect on student motivation and academic performance. STUDENT TEAM LEARNING offers students the opportunity to interact productively and learn from one another. Adapted from a program developed at the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University, STUDENT TEAM LEARNING can be used in any academic subject area, from grades three through twelve.

To break down the isolation of Metco students and promote improved academic performance, Faye Ruopp is using STUDENT TEAM LEARNING techniques she created as a mathematics teacher at Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School. Students' cross-cultural relationships have improved, and they have learned to cooperate with one another while enhancing their own academic performance. In addition, Faye has worked with teachers in other departments to modify these techniques to their subject areas.

Three specific techniques are used: Students Teams-Achievement Divisions, Teams-Games-Tournaments, and Jigsaw. The first brings together groups of four or five students, mixed by gender, racial and ethnic backgrounds, and academic performance. They study together, and take tests individually—but are scored as a team, as well as individually. Each student contributes to the team score in proportion to her or his improvement over past performance, not the raw score.

A variation on the theme is Teams-Games-Tournaments, which uses academic games rather than tests. It is structured so that the lowest achievers compete with one another and may contribute just as many points to the team as the higher achievers. Jigsaw, the third technique, also uses teams of four or five, usually in History of English classes. All students are assigned a narrative and each student is given a topic on which to become an expert. Each is responsible for teaching other team members what they have learned, and tests determined how effective they were.

The STUDENT TEAM LEARNING approach can also be used for gifted or special needs students, for any grade level, and with any combination of groups of students. It can be learned in an afternoon, and does not require that teachers change their presentation of material. Faye is prepared to work with schools and school systems to design effective ways to use this approach in their settings. She will be available to conduct workshops and do follow-up with teachers who are implementing the approach.

Faye Ruopp has been a classroom teacher for 14 years. She is a certified trainer in the nationally validated instructional process of Student Team Learning, and has worked with teachers in a variety of school systems. At conferences and workshops such as the International School Improvement Project and the Massachusetts Teachers Association Leadership Conference on Professional Development, she has presented the concepts to other teachers who want to improve relationships among their students as well as student academic achievement. Faye has also been a guest lecturer in teaching methods courses at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and has been active in addressing issues particular to biracial classes.

Barbara Shea and Samuel Slarskey
How Much Does a Sand Dune Weigh? Motivating Students Through A Subject Integrated Teaching Experience (SITE)

Students need opportunities to see the relation of the skills they are learning to the world around them. In their fifth grade class at Boxborough's Blanchard Memorial School, Barbara Shea and Samuel Slarskey have created a subject-integrated alternative to traditional unit-focused blocks of instruction. "HOW MUCH DOES A SAND DUNE WEIGH?"—the unusual title of their program is typical of the thought-provoking questions and ideas that students investigate during the school year.

This program is based on the premise that students will be most motivated and involved in their learning when they are working as a group toward a specific tangible goal. One such goal that Barbara and Sam have used successfully with their students is a year-end three day trip to Cape Cod. In working toward this concrete goal students are motivated to learn the history of the places they will visit; they study the geography and ecology of the Cape, as well as environmental issues that affect the area, write research papers, poems and plays on related topics, and develop art and music projects.

Students also learn through doing the work of planning and executing a detailed itinerary and raising all of the money for the trip. Students contact scores of people and agencies through letters, and earn and keep books on substantial sums of money. The time at the Cape includes beach walks, museum research, journal writing, tidal pool study, beach art, and travel to varied historical and natural environments.

The SITE concept is well suited to grades five through eight. Barbara Shea and Sam Slarskey look forward to helping teachers adapt this program, generating different goals that would be feasible and beneficial to their students. For example, rather than working toward an educational trip, students might raise funds for their school playground, build a class relationship with a local elderly group, fund a charity, or provide school enrichment programs. The essential element is involving the whole class in working toward a tangible goal, and then using that goal as a basis for writing assignments, varied math and reading skill applications, and numerous science and social studies concepts.

Barbara and Sam are available to conduct single or multiple workshops for interested school systems. They will work with individual teachers or groups of teachers in adapting this approach to their own school's resources and needs and will provide continuing technical assistance as needed. They have also prepared a set of written materials describing the program that teachers can use as a model in developing their own materials. Because many of the concepts and skills covered by this program are part of the regular curriculum, no additional funds or special materials are needed to start.

Barbara Shea and Sam Slarskey have both been active in training other teachers as well as educating students. A graduate of Framingham State, with a Masters from Lowell State, Barbara has 23 years of teaching experience, and has conducted seminars and workshops in experimental education at both the University of Lowell and the University of New Hampshire. She serves as the chair of the town's committee to write a math curriculum. Among other interests, she has a strong background in environmental issues.

Sam has been teaching for 16 years. He has a B.S. from Lowell State and an M.Ed. from Boston University in Educational Leadership and Curriculum design. He has written curriculum guides for elementary school science and a published guide for K-6 in "Human Health, Growth and Reproduction." He also has many years of stage experience.

Susan Szachowicz
Witnessing the Past: An Experiential Approach to Social Studies Education

Secondary students frequently pose two questions that imply dissatisfaction with their social studies classes: "Why do we *have* to study history?" and "How many years of history do we *have* to take?" WITNESSING THE PAST is an experiential approach to learning history that promotes active classroom participation and hence creates a more positive attitude towards social studies education. In developing this program for her Brockton High students, Susan Szachowicz has found it possible to both enliven traditional content objectives and heighten student retention of important academic information.

Witnessing the Past is structured around a series of role-playing activities, through which students become actively engaged in learning about and from the past. They witness the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, watch Roman citizens plead for their lives before Emperor Justinian, cheer for knights in armor jousting for their ladies' honor, observe an American murder trial in action. Each activity demands the participation of every class member. Students are also expected to review primary source documents and keep their own "historical" journals. Although highly structured, the activities leave room for individual creativity, exercise of the imagination and development of critical thinking skills.

This program works well with students at all academic levels. In preparing to play the various roles, students carry out a variety of individual and group assignments that can be readily adapted to the level of the class. For example, students may be required to read, learn new vocabulary words, conduct research, write a biographical sketch or theme, keep a journal, draw or paint, communicate in small and large groups, formulate a hypothesis, put forth a logical argument, defend a position, engage in debate, or detect a bias.

WITNESSING THE PAST can be integrated into any social students course in any school district. Susan is available to conduct in-service workshops or clinics, presenting and demonstrating activities in the curriculum. After an initial presentation or seminar, she will be available to demonstrate activitie in classrooms, and to meet with teachers outside the classroom to assist them in adapting the material. Teachers will also be encouraged to develop their own activities based on the model Susan presents.

To facilitate this process, Susan has developed a handbook which describes the activities and includes specific strategies for classroom implementation. The activity packets are designed to enable teachers to select the particular activities that best fit into their curriculum and complement their course content. The handbook includes activity packets for a wide range of topics, from Roman Justice to Renaissance Superstars, from The Growth of Democracy—Our Court System in Action to Islamic Law.

Susan Szachowicz has the neccessary experience, creativity and humor to bring this program to life for other teachers. During her eleven years of teaching at Brockton High School she has worked with many different populations of students, at varying academic levels. She has assisted other teachers to incorporate her activities into their courses and has had the pleasure of seeing the materials work in a variety of settings. In addition, her material has been published in a number of professional journals and newsletters and she has presented at numerous professional conferences, including the National Council for the Social Studies Conventions in Houston and Boston; the National Council for Teachers of English; and regional social students conferences throughout New England and New York.

Ms. Szachowicz received her undergraduate and Masters Degree from Bridgewater State. In 1984, she was the recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship to India. She was also selected for the U.S. Educational Mission to Greece in 1982, and was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar Grant at Duke University. She has been on the staff of St. Lawrence University demonstrating instructional strategies to secondary school teachers in Canada.

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Mary Ann Thompson
All A-Board for Black History

The middle elementary grades are a crucial time to help students develop a sense of pride in their history and a sense of the positive value of different cultures. Innovative methods are required to achieve these goals in a way that engages and excites young students. Mary Ann Thompson developed ALL ABOARD FOR BLACK HISTORY to motivate her students at the Francis Parkman School in Jamaica Plain to develop curiosity about their own histories and cultures, as well as about people who are different from them. The program works successfuly with students in grades 3-5, many of whom are below grade level in reading.

ALL ABOARD FOR BLACK HISTORY is a series of board games which engage young learners in discovering important historical role models, while reinforcing their reading, writing, listening, speaking, studying and cooperative skills. Students team up to research, read, write and deliver oral reports on individuals who exemplify the topic of study. For example, "Women of Wisdom" leads students to read about such important historical figures as Mary McLeod Bethune, or Harriet Tubman. The variety of possible topics and historical figures is limitless. If students are primarily remedial readers, the emphasis is on oral reports, peer cooperation and dramatic techniques like charades that make the historical figures come alive for the students. "Hands on" activities, along with a storytelling approach can also spark students' interest. If a biography is too difficult for some students, part of it is read aloud by the better readers in the class.

The game uses a laminated nine-square board (like tic tac toe). After studying the biographies, students come up with a one-line description of the person that captures the most important points about that individual. This "one-liner" becomes a game piece, and when the game is played the class must identify the historical person from the piece. To win, the people in three connecting squares must be identified.

Mary Ann can help other teachers adapt the game to the needs and skills of their students. Many of the approaches, types of assignments, materials and resources used in ALL ABOARD FOR BLACK HISTORY are easily adaptable to other classrooms and other topics. For example, Hispanic, Native American and Asian cultures can all be similarly explored. There has also been an adaptation entitled, "King for a Day," centered around the life and ideals of Martin Luther King. Mary Ann is available to conduct in-service workshops, in which teachers will have a chance to try out the game for themselves, see it in action, and discover ways to adapt the concepts to their own learning settings. She will also help teachers individually in adapting her program.

Mary Ann Thompson is a skilled and experienced workshop leader. Under a grant from Impact II in the Boston Public School System, she conducted in-service workshops which were so popular that they were packed with participants. An elementary reading specialist in the Boston public schools for the past fifteen years, Mary Ann has gained increasing recognition for her skills in curriculum development and teacher training. A Queens College graduate, she has shared her experience widely through both formal workshops and contacts with many other teachers throughout the state.

Joan Tieman
The Children's Literature Project

"A little boy wanted to fly, so his teacher taught him to read."
Sam Cornish

Children's early experiences with literature have dramatic bearing on their ability to read, to write, and to begin to make sense out of an increasingly complicated world. Children are greatly influenced by parents' and teachers' attitudes—which in turn reflect the shape and quality of their own responses to literature, as well as the way they view their own roles with children. The goals of the CHILDREN'S LITERATURE PROJECT are to put good literature at the center of study in the elementary school (K-8), and to refine the quality of children's literary experience at home and school.

While it is flexible in form, the CHILDREN'S LITERATURE PROJECT basically involves teachers, librarians, students and parents in learning more about the scope and uses of children's literature. Through seminars, coursework, and demonstration teaching, the Project builds a community of committed people. Specific activities which may be tailored to a particular system's needs include:

• An inservice course for teachers and school librarians, titled "Children an Literature." Designed to meet the particular requirements of participating school systems, this course will give a broad overview of children's literature from many periods and genres, and provide specific materials such as course outlines, bibliographies, and strategies for discussion and written models. It will consist of four sessions, each lasting an hour and a half.

• A seminar series, "The Child, the Teacher, and The Book." In addition to pursuing topics in the introductory course in more depth, seminars will address such specific areas as cultural diversity, the child and war, folktales from different parts of the world, and autobiography.

• Student activities such as roundtables on a specific genre, reponse journals to encourage free reactions to literature, or picture book and mystery story projects in which children study models and create their own examples.

• Talks for parent groups, such as "Children's Literature and Its Resources: A Parent's Point of View," to acquaint parents with resources such as newsletters, libraries, and children's bookshops.

To implement the CHILDREN'S LITERATURE PROJECT, Joan Tieman will spend four to six weeks in a school system (approximately two days/week), consulting with teachers, working in classrooms, providing in-service training, and producing and disseminating a children's literature newsletter. The newsletter will tell teachers about newly published books, books which lend themselves to discussion and teaching, authors and illustrators, and resources and materials of professional interest. The most important ingredient for success of the overall program is commitment by administrators and teachers, who will provide a physical space to set up a children's literature center, space for conducting classes and seminars, and time for teachers to attend in-service courses.

Joan Tieman has been recognized in many forums for her extensive work on children's literature during her 20 years in the Brookline Public Schools. Now one of ten members nationwide of Teacher's Choices an Annual Book Distinction of the National Council of Teachers of English, she helps select the top 20 new children's books. Joan has used her Master's Degree in Children's Literature from Simmons College as a basis for design and coordination of the Brookline-Simmons Children's Literature Consortium. Well-known for her innovative approach to engaging children in reading, she has spoken and conducted workshops for audiences throughout New England, and has served as a consultant to such programs as "Some Scars Do Not Show."

Carolee Varga and Pauline Boutin
Renaissance in the Public Schools

When administrators, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, students and the wider community work together they can create a stimulating and cohesive learning environment that indeed brings a "Renaissance" to their school. Developed cooperatively by the principal and staff at the McKay school in Beverly, the RENAISSANCE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS program uses an interdisciplinary arts and sciences curriculum as the vehicle for fostering enthusiasm for learning among students and encourages cooperation among staff, students, parents, and the community.

As core teachers in this program for the past three years, Carolee Varga and Pauline Boutin, have used a chronology of medieval or Renaissance events as the focal point of the curriculum. Other historical periods or topics could be selected, depending on the needs and interests of the school community. The point is to select a topic that can become the basis for interdisciplinary, cross-age learning and that has the potential of sparking enthusiasm and interest from the entire school community.

At the McKay, for example, the entire student body and school staff, with the help of visiting experts and artists in residence have participated in such events as feasts, tournaments, festivals, fairs, holiday revels, concerts and plays. In addition, the school community worked together on such projects as creating a herb garden. The children helped turn the earth and write scripts for a planting ceremony. A sundial was constructed for the center of the garden, which introduces the solstice and the seasons. The children heard from an herbalist about the uses of what they had planted, and from a pharmacist about medieval medicine. They made their own hand lotion with glycerin and rosewater, and bottled and sold it under the "McKay McCurative label which they designed themselves. For the holidays, they made pomanders for holiday gifts.

As the year wore on, the herb garden continued to provide opportunities for learning and enjoyment. Herbs were sold at a special Medieval Faire to help support the program—and were used to dye wool, which was then woven into a tapestry depicting school events. As the garden grew, it was the basis for discussion about the agrarian economy, and how the feudal system worked. Thus art, craft, science and history were woven together, as a result of an immediate experience which the children themselves had a significant hand in creating.

Carolee Varga and Pauline Boutin are eager to share what they have learned about the value of such an approach and to help teachers adapt the approach to their own school communities. They will be available to conduct workshops, share curriculum materials and approaches and provide ongoing consultation and technical assistance for schools that are interested in adapted this program. The teachers they work with will need some release time for curriculum and program development, and they will need support from other teachers, parents and administration. While the purchase of special supplies would enhance such a program, the process could be carried out effectively with the materials on hand in most schools.

Both Pauline Boutin and Carolee Varga have been teaching for twenty years. Pauline Boutin has taught grades 4-6; she has worked with diverse groups of students, including students who are culturally disadvantaged, minority, learning disabled and gifted. She coordinates a number of innovative programs in the areas of math and science, for example she is responsible for all aspects of school-wide yearly science fair and she has organized an inter-level arithmetic dynamics program that challenges the mathematical prowess of the students. As a team member of the Science Collaborative with Salem State College, she has gained experience in working with other teachers.

Carolee has worked with children in grades 1-8, including students who are developmentally delayed or have handicapping conditions. Her creative strengths in art and the language arts complement Pauline's science and math skills. She has presented information about the Renaissance program to professional groups and to neighboring schools. Carolee is experienced in working with other teachers and administrators, school committees, parents, and the community. She has served as an officer in various professional associations and has travelled widely to sites related to medieval and Renaissance history.